

REMARKS

1. Claims 1-5, 7-12 and 14 are pending in the Application and stand rejected. Claims 13 and 15-23 have been cancelled. In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the application.

2. Rejection Under §103(a). Claims 1-5, 7-8, 10-14, 17, 18 and 21-23 stand rejected over Kalnin (US Patent 3,674,581) in view of Goldberg (U.S. Patent 4,717,341) and also apparently in view of Examiner's Official Notice. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. The combination of elements recited in Claim 1 is not taught or suggested in the art of record. Kalnin does not recite the step of "placing a composite of fiber and resin in a shrinkable die", nor does it recite that the step of "heating occurs gradually along the length of the die, such that shrinking occurs at one of the top and the bottom prior to occurring at the other of the top and the bottom". None of the other cited references teach or suggest this combination of elements. As noted by the Applicant in paragraph [0034], gradual sequential heating along the length of the die is advantageous in that it helps with removal of excess resin. Heating in this manner is also advantageous in that it helps with penetration of resin into and between fibers.

Claims 2-5, 7-8, 10-12 and 14 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claim 4 recites another highly advantageous feature: the additional step of "bending the shrinkable die containing the composite prior to the step of heating, and thereby forming a curved profile." Claim 5 depends upon claim 4 and recites yet another highly advantageous feature, "the step of pulling on the fiber during the step of heating the die". These combination of elements are also not taught or suggested in the art of record. Claims 13, 17-18 and 21-23 have been cancelled. The other claims have been amended so that they are all dependent upon Claim 1, and remove reference to the tunnel of the die and/or add further features of the invention. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

3. Rejection Under §103(a). Claim 9 stands rejected over Kalnin in view of Goldberg, apparently Examiner's Official Notice and further in view of Gray (US Patent 5,718,251). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claim 9 depends from claim 1 which is allowable over Kalnin, Goldberg & Examiner's Official Notice for the reasons stated above. Nothing in Gray teaches or suggests pulling each one of the plurality of strands in directions "towards the top of the die and towards the bottom of the die." Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

4. Rejection Under §103(a). Claims 19 and 20 stand rejected over Kalnin in view of Goldberg, apparently Examiner's Official Notice, and further in view of Gray (US Patent 5,718,251). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claims 19 and 20 have been cancelled. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection of the claims and allowance of the application.

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February 24, 2009
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